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AMERICAN SOCIALIST

Readers For The American Socialist Now Means Party Members Later On

VOL. IV. No. 3.

TRADE UNION COUNCILS 304

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1917.

25 CENTS FOR SIX MONTHS; 50 CENTS PER YEAR; \$1 PER YEAR OUTSIDE UNITED STATES

NATION'S PRESS RECOGNIZES AMERICAN SOCIALIST AS CHAMPION OF CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES

COMRADES:

THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST stands today as the chief champion of the right of a free press and of the Constitutional Guarantees of American liberty.

All over the country the case of THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST is being eagerly watched and followed by the capitalist press as well as the socialist and labor press. It is the test case. If we are victorious, it means that Democracy has still a safe hold in this land. If we are defeated, it means that autocracy has strangled the American Constitution, and that no longer is there any security of life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness.

Such widely different newspapers as the New York Times, the New York World, the New York Evening Mail, The Public, the Chicago Herald, and the Chicago Examiner, concede to The American Socialist the position of championing the rights of all the press.

The Chicago Examiner says, in its principal editorial of July 20, "Whenever the time comes that any American citizen is not absolutely safe in the free expression of his opinion as to the policies of government, THEN NO ONE OF US IS SAFE."

"If we permit these aggressions upon the constitutional rights of citizens which seem to have become the fashion, to continue and to grow in frequency and force, IT MAY EASILY HAPPEN THAT OUR CHILDREN WILL NOT BE A FREE PEOPLE AT ALL."

And the Business Manager of the New York Times—a paper as far removed from Socialists and Socialism as the north pole from the south—bitterly attacked the Post-office Department in a speech before the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce for suppressing The American Socialist and sixteen other Socialist newspapers, saying "It is a power which the department should not have."

When The American Socialist decided to send its committee of lawyers to Washington—the biggest labor lawyers in this or any other country—the first and biggest step was taken toward protecting American rights and the American Constitution from aggression. Frank P. Walsh, Clarence Darrow, Seymour Stedman and Morris Hillquit went to headquarters. They talked with Postmaster General Burleson, with the Federal Judge who is administering the law for the Postoffice Department, and with many of the United States Senators. What the result is at this moment we do not know. But we do know this.

THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST HAS STARTED THE BIGGEST FIGHT THIS COUNTRY HAS YET SEEN IN PROTECTION OF DEMOCRACY AT HOME.

Stand by us. If we fail, you fail. If we are defeated, you are defeated, and you and your children after you for many a generation will pay the penalty.

We need your aid—your moral support as well as your financial support. Some have asked whether they will be safe in taking subscriptions. YOU WILL BE PROTECTED IN THIS. All subscribers will receive full value for what they send us.

We are going to win, either now or later. It depends on you whether we will win NOW or not.

In this issue are given some of the editorials and expressions of opinion from those who are closely following our fight. It is not a Socialist fight only—it involves all parties and all people. For if a subordinate official in a Democratic administration can suppress any Socialist paper with whose policy he does not agree, then a Republican, a Progressive, a Prohibition, a Single Tax or even a REFORM DEMOCRATIC newspaper can likewise be suppressed.

Bring this to your local newspaper's notice. Demand of your editor that he join in this fight to protect his own rights and your own liberties. The future of American freedom is at stake, and The American Socialist at this moment is its champion.

Believes In Constitution

House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

I am a firm believer in free speech and the freedom of the press as my record in congress during the last seven years will disclose.

I take the constitution as its reads and believe every word of it, and for that reason believe your paper should have the use of the mails.

E. E. ROBERTS,
Representative from Nevada.

Senator Vardaman, Of Mississippi, Makes Speech In United States Senate Against Putting Padlocks On Mouths Of Free Men—Stedman In Great Protest Against Revocation Of Second Class Mailing Privileges—Darrow Returns To Washington.

By J. L. ENGDAHL.

(Special to The American Socialist)

WASHINGTON, D. C.—"The effort to put a padlock on the mouths of the free men of this country at this time is unfortunate in the extreme, and it will recoil upon those who do it."

With these words U. S. Senator Vardaman, Mississippi, opened the fight in the United States Senate to preserve the "inalienable and constitutional right" of a free press in this country during the war.

Only a few hours before, the Socialist Party Free Press Committee had discussed the suppression of Socialist papers with Senator Vardaman, as we had taken up this momentous question with a score of other senators and representatives.

"The nation has gone war-mad and money-mad," was Vardaman's explanation for the blind and ruthless crushing at this time of the fundamental liberties of the common people.

Rising in the senate to discuss the food bill, and uttering his opposition to conscription for the aviation corps, stating the people had "had more conscription than they relish," Senator Vardaman took up the discussion of Socialist publications as follows:

"We have heard of the excluding from the mails of certain newspapers that are guilty of no offense except the exercise of the blood-bought privilege of honest patriotic citizens to express their convictions on government and social questions. I do not agree with much that some of these newspapers say, but I deny the right of any officer, from president down to constable, to proscribe, limit or abridge the right of free speech.

"It is not treachery in a newspaper editor to express his disapproval of anything that the Congress or the President has done since the beginning of this war. He has got a right to do it, and to deny his paper the privileges of the mail for publishing his thoughts violates the spirit and letter of the constitution and the very genius of our government.

"There is no danger, no harm is to come, from the free and full discussion of all public questions, and I think the closing of the mails against such publications is unwarranted, and the further effort to put a padlock on the mouths of the free men of this country at this time is unfortunate in the extreme, and it will recoil upon those who do it.

"The tyranny of the Prussian despot is out of place in this republic. The methods of the despot cannot last long among free people, and he who undertakes to transplant that noxious social weed upon American soil will find that it will grow up to clog his pathway and lacerate his feet."

Senator Vardaman lauded the efforts of the Canadians to oppose conscription in the following language:

"It is very gratifying to me to see from the newspapers the manifestations of independence and patriotic courage on the part of our brethren across the border in Canada. They are protesting against certain acts of injustice—of petty tyranny—on the part of the government, and they have a right to do it. It is their government; and I want to say, Mr. President, that it will be an unhappy day for America when her citizens are denied the right to express their sincere and honest thoughts about public questions."

Renewed Threat Made By P. O. D.

An additional threat against the life of the American Socialist has been made by A. M. Dockery, formerly governor of Missouri and now Third Assistant Postmaster General of the United States. It is to revoke the second-class privilege altogether, on the ground, apparently, that since several issues have been declared unavailable by the Postoffice Department, this constitutes an interruption of regularity of issue, and therefore we have violated the law which provides for regularity of issue!

The letter is as follows:

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
Third Assistant Postmaster General
Washington.

Publisher, The American Socialist,
Chicago, Ill.

You are hereby notified that in accordance with the Act of Congress approved March 3, 1901 (ch. 551, 31 Stat. L. 1107) you will be granted a hearing at the office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General, Washington,

D. C., at 3:00 p. m. Friday, July 20, 1917, to show cause why the authorization of admission of The American Socialist to the second class of mail matter under the Act of March 3, 1879, (ch. 180, Sec. 14, 1 Supp., 246) should not be revoked, upon the following ground:

The Publication is not a "newspaper or other periodical publication" within the meaning of the law governing mailable matter of the second class, and, furthermore, it is not regularly issued at stated intervals as a newspaper or other periodical publication within the meaning of the law, it being in conflict with the provisions of the law embodied in section 481 1/2, Postal laws and regulations.

Your appearance at the hearing may be in person or by representative. In any event, your answer must be in writing. It should be submitted on or before July 20, 1917, and will be given the same consideration as the you had appeared in person or by representative.

Respectfully,

A. M. DOCKERY,
Third Assistant Postmaster General.

Our comrades may rest assured that everything which can legally be done to prevent this action is being done

Stedman Makes Great Protest

Seymour Stedman's statement in the third assistant postmaster general's department arguing against revocation of second class mailing privilege of Socialist publications, was as follows:

"I understand your position to be that a paper excluded by the Department for containing non-mailable matter, altho it may be but a single issue, destroys the continuity of the publication; and that you consider it as tho no paper had been issued for that week or month, and therefore it is your privilege to cancel its right to pass as second-class mail matter.

"This is based upon the proposition that these papers contain improper matter which has been prohibited from going thru the mails.

"In the case of fraud and lotteries and the promotion of fraudulent design you can with some certainty discover the illegal matter in the paper, stop it, and prosecute those guilty of the offense.

"This is quite a different situation. You have stopped fifteen or twenty papers. You now propose to debar them from the mails. Some of them have been published for years without complaint, their rights apparently secured. These papers are published by working people who contribute their half dollars and their quarters and their nickels.

"The opportunity to make good our error is given by the invitation which the Socialist party has received from the Russian Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, an invitation to participate in this same Stockholm conference.

Tscheide, president of the Russian Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, and at the same time a member of the Russian provisional government, thus writes to Morris Hillquit, secretary of the American Socialist party:

The council expresses the firm hope that the American party, which since the beginning of the war has repeatedly urged the convocation of an international Socialist conference, will consider it as a duty of honor to send its representatives to the conference of the council.

The day is at hand when the Socialist party has got to be treated as something more than a joke. This business of confounding the Socialists with the anarchists must cease. The ban which the Department of Justice and the Postoffice department are jointly operating against Socialist publications is an unfortunate commentary upon freedom of speech in this country. The general organ of the Socialist party is "The American Socialist," a weekly which appears in Chicago. The last two numbers have been forbidden the mails. Only a two-page number has been allowed circulation, and then only after every line of it had been submitted to the Department of Justice.

In any case our Socialists will probably be allowed to sail, now that the mainspring of the Russian government itself invites them.

Help Defend The Bill Of Rights!

We stand faced by a supreme crisis. A blow has been struck at the First Amendment to the Constitution—at the first Article in the Bill of Rights—at the Free Press of this Republic. The instant and concerted energy of the whole American people must rally to its defense.

The August leaflet of the Socialist party contains a statement of the case of The American Socialist vs. the Post Office Department, as here given. It includes Stedman's summing up of the situation, and a summary of the comments of the nation's press. This is now ready.

We urge every reader of The American Socialist, whether Socialist party member or not, who desires the maintenance of the Bill of Rights, to order at once at least 100 of the August leaflets—as many more as you can possibly handle—and to distribute them immediately. The price is 15 cents per hundred, \$1.00 a thousand. The price is a little higher than usual because of the emergency which confronts us.

It is not possible to explain fully how dire and pressing the necessity is. We can say only this: ACT AT ONCE.

Send your order for August Leaflet (price 15 cents per 100, \$1.00 per 1,000) to the National Office, Socialist Party, 803 W. Madison St., Chicago, Ill.

C. E. Ruthenberg, A. Wagenknecht and Edward Baker, officials of the Socialist Party of Ohio, have been found guilty of conspiring to evade the draft law. Sentence has been deferred.

Bureaucratic Despotism

From The New York World.

Needless to say, The World has no sympathy whatever with the editorial attitude toward the war and the Government of the various Socialist, pacifist and radical periodicals that have been excluded from the mails for their semi-seditious utterances. Yet we can think of no more pernicious method of dealing with such offenses than to leave the punishment to the judgment of the bureaucrats in the Post Office Department.

Either the writers and publishers of these articles are guilty of a specific offense under the law or they are not. If they are guilty, there are grand juries and district attorneys and courts and juries to deal with them. If they are not guilty, it is an offense against free institutions to deny them the use of the mails.

What could be more ridiculous or inadequate than to permit a so-called seditious periodical to have unlimited circulation thru news agents in a great city like New York and then arbitrarily cut off a few hundred copies that may be circulated thru the mails by way of making the punishment fit the crime? But wholly aside from any question of pains and penalties imposed upon a section of the press that is published for the crack-brains of the country is the increasing use of the Post Office Department as a means of regulating the habits, morals and political opinions of the American people.

The practice began with the lottery legislation and has been extended by leaps and bounds. The Post Office Department today is the most irresponsible despotism known to free government. There is not a citizen of the United States, there is not a business or industry in the country, that cannot be deprived of the use of the mails on the ipso dictu of a benevolent bureaucrat of the post office. No legal evidence is necessary. No court proceeding is required. A written order duly signed and countersigned, and the thing is done.

The original function of the post office was to collect, transport and deliver the mails. That function has almost been forgotten. The mails are becoming merely a by-product of a nation-wide system of regulating everything from political opinions to the sale of patent corkscrews in prohibition territory. Nothing human is too great or too small to escape the scrutiny of this bureaucracy.

The principle under which the Socialist and pacifist periodicals are excluded from the mails can be extended to every publication whose opinions are objectionable to the mandarins of the postal service. Either this is a government by law or it is not, and if it is to be a government of law the post office cannot remain much longer an irresponsible prosecuting attorney, judge and jury combined.

The Seed Of Absolutism

From The Public, Founded By Louis F. Post.

The attention of Mr. William H. Lamar, attorney for the Post Office Department, must be called to the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This says:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press....

Mr. Lamar should study this section because he is under the impression that authority to abridge freedom of the press has been conferred upon him by the Espionage Act. Acting on this impression he has entered on a policy of suppression which, if upheld and persisted in, must make the democratic sections of the Constitution mere scraps of paper; and must make the United States a very insecure place for democracy. His latest exploit is the suppression of an issue of THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST of Chicago. The issue has been suppressed merely because it happens to be Mr. Lamar's personal opinion that something in it is contrary to the Espionage Act. Leaving out of consideration congressional lack of authority to abridge freedom of the press, there still remains the fact that Mr. Lamar's individual opinion, the basis of which has not even been made public, should not decide what may or may not be admitted to the mails.

In view of such attacks on the freedom of the press it is well to repeat some of the unanswerable arguments advanced by Louis F. Post when, during Roosevelt's administration, the postal censors suppressed a Chicago publication on the charge of "immorality," without indicating what matter in the paper came under that head. Mr. Post, after many months of effort to secure from reluctant and secretive officials information concerning the specific offense of the suppressed paper, finally learned, to quote his own words, "that it was for publishing two articles, only the titles of which are given, and in which, however offensive they may be to good taste, even a prude could hardly find material for specification on a charge of immorality." In comment Mr. Post said editorially in THE PUBLIC of August 12, 1905:

So long as an administrative officer can withdraw mailing rights from publication for any offense, whatever, without an opportunity for the publisher to be heard in his own defense before an impartial tribunal, fair play is impossible. The way to mailing rights to indecent publications, as far as possible, is to prohibit the publication of any article that is an affront to the public sense of decency. Any law that authorizes it should be swept from the statute books.... Under the postal censorship publications are denied mailing rights, not because they are offensive to the public, but because the censor, from whom there is no appeal, chooses to think them so. Here is the seed of a mighty tree of absolutism.

The same comment applies with even greater force to the censorship of today. The "seed of a mighty tree of absolutism" has begun to sprout. It should not be allowed to flourish any longer.

A resolution urging Congress to enact legislation requiring the federal trade commission to take over the operation of American paper mills and to import and distribute Canadian print paper as a war measure has been forwarded to Washington by the National Editorial Association, in annual convention at Minneapolis, Minn. Let the editors now go back home and agitate to have the government socialize the production and distribution of all the necessities of life.

Two Economic Classes

By MORRIS HILLQUIT.

ODERN society is split into two principal economic classes: the users of the machinery of production, who do not own it, and the owners, who do not use it; the employers and the employees, the capitalists and the workers, those who derive their income from "profits" and those who depend for their living on "wages." The classes are not fixed by law, but they are determined just as effectively by economic position, and as the modern industrial system is unfolding, they tend to become permanent and even hereditary. A lucky workman or clerk may still occasionally be lifted into the coveted realms of wealth and power, but the probabilities of such a rise are not much greater than the proverbial chances of each soldier in the Napoleonic army to be advanced to the rank of field marshal. The vast mass of wage-earners are doomed to factory work for life, and their children are predestined factory workers. And similarly capitalism is rapidly becoming a hereditary status. The "self-made man," the pioneer of a new industry, is fast passing away. Modern wealth is largely in the hands of second or third generations. The gay heir who squanders his fortune and is reduced to the original poverty of his grandfathers becomes rarer, as the fortunes of the individual capitalists grow in bulk, and corporate management supersedes individual initiative.

It is not contended that the entire population is definitely divided into the two classes mentioned. There are, of course, the more or less indefinite and undefinable economic groups, generally designated as the "middle classes," with all shades of special interests, but the main factors in modern industrial life are clearly represented by the two most pronounced types or classes—the capitalists and the wage-earners, the latter comprising all grades of hired manual and mental workers.

* * *

AND THERE is war between and among the classes. War, sometimes overt and violent, sometimes concealed and even unconscious, but war nevertheless. The war is all the more intense and reprehensible because it springs not from personal hostility or accidental misunderstandings, but from ever-present organic economic antagonism.

There is war between employer and employee.

The employer is in business for profits. Industrial profits come from the work of the hired hand. The employee works for wages. Wages represent the product of his labor after deduction of the employer's profit. The larger the share of the profit, the smaller that of the wages. The employer must strive to maintain or increase his profits under penalty of industrial extermination. His personal views and feelings cannot alter the situation. The employee must strive to maintain or increase his wages under pain of physical destruction. His personal inclinations do not count. Sometimes this antagonism of interests expresses itself in petty bargaining and commonplace haggling, and at other times it assumes the form of violent conflicts: strikes, boycotts and riots, and on the other hand lockouts, black lists, injunctions and jails.

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THERE IS war between employer and employee.

Each capitalist controls a share of an industry. The greater the share, the larger is ordinarily his profit. His natural desire is to increase his share. He can do that only at the expense of his neighbor. Hence the mad industrial competition, the merciless rivalry for the "market," the mutual underbidding and underselling, the adulteration and falsification of commodities, the senseless speculative enterprises, and finally, wholesale failure and ruin.

* * *

THERE IS war between employer and worker.

Modern machinery, altho inherently of untold blessing to mankind, operates as a curse upon the toiler under the prevailing system of individual ownership. It does not lighten the burdens of the worker. It does not reduce his hours of labor—it disposes him from his employment. The marvelous productivity of the machine creates the dread legions of jobless workers, the fierce competition for a chance to work and the consequent lowering of wages below the living standard.

The automatic, almost self-operating machine makes child and woman labor possible and profitable, and the children and wives of the workers are drafted into the field of industry in competition with their fathers and husbands. The more women and children are at work in the factories, the rarer become the opportunities for men to find work and the lower become their wages. Child and woman labor mean lower wages for man. Low wages for men mean more child and woman labor, and so the workers move forever in a vicious circle of misery and privation.

There is war between producer and user.

Business is conducted for profits. The larger the prices of the commodity or the higher the rate of service, the greater is ordinarily the profit of the capitalist. Hence the everlasting quarrels between the seller and buyer, the landlord and tenant, the carrier and passenger: the aggressive and inexorable "producer" and the pitiable "ultimate consumer."

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Debs And "Public Safety"

PUBLIC Safety" will not allow Eugene V. Debs to be heard in the free and sovereign state of Minnesota. He is too dangerous, according to the authorities, to be allowed to speak in these days when all good patriots should be fighting for democracy and free speech and other things that are free everywhere except in Minnesota and other sovereign states of the United States of America. The story is brief but interesting:

Last winter the Coit-Alber Chautauqua Company booked Debs for the Fourth of July speech which was to be the opening number of the Chautauqua at St. Peter, Minn. Some time later when Debs had to cancel his

TREASER IS CHARGE AGAINST 16 CINCINNATI SOCIALISTS

By NICHOLAS KLEIN.

Sixteen Socialists arrested at Cincinnati, O., are being held by the federal court on charges of treason. Eleven were arrested June 1. The others were taken later. Most of these are charged with distributing anti-registration literature from house to house. One is charged with speaking against registration. This is the sum total of their alleged offense.

The prisoners are as follows: Philip Rothenbush is 31 years old, married, has two small children, aged six and nine years, is a member of machinists union. Alfred Welker is 21 years of age, single, printer and a member of his union. Charles Thiemann is 22 years of age, single and a union man. John Hahn is 20 years old, married, has a child aged two years and is a laborer. Walter Gregory is married, has four small children, is 29 years old and a member of machinists union. Arthur Tiedke is 30 years old, married, has a child aged three years and is a member of paperhangers union. William Gruber is married, has two children aged two and three years and is a member of brewery workers union. Alexander Feldhaus, aged 26 years, shipping clerk, married, has one child aged four years. Fred Schneider, single aged 9 years. Frank Reis, aged 21 years, single member Boot and Shoe Workers union. Joseph Geier, married, aged 32 years, has five small children, safe maker and member of his union. Gustav Weiss, aged 21 years, single, lives at Hamilton, Ohio, charged with treason for making speech, put to \$9,000 bond. William Georg, aged 52 years, married, has five children, member Brewery workers union. Lotte Burke, a member of Womans Label League, aged 45 years, single seamstress, in jail in default of \$9,000 bail. Thomas Hammerschmitt, Socialist candidate for Mayor of Cincinnati, married, engineer, member of his union, aged 48 years, his bail now fixed at \$9,000.

According to rule of Federal Court here it would take \$36,000 worth of real estate exclusive of mortgages to release Comrade Hammerschmitt or Miss Burke. All the comrades are citizens. All but two were born in America.

PRUSSIANISM STATE OF MIND, NOT A PLACE, SAYS TUCKER.

Chicago newspapers grossly misrepresented the address of Irwin St. John Tucker in opening the Second American Conference for Democracy and Terms of Peace as permanent chairman.

In order to correct these misrepresentations, the full text of the address is given herewith:

Tucker's Speech.

"We have gathered here from many states to discuss means whereby the American people may make good their nation's claim that it seeks to render the world safe for democracy. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt's Fourth of July speech at Oyster Bay "Even while fighting we must prepare the way for the peace of industrial justice and the peace of industrial democracy, which are to come after and consecrate the war." We are here to prove to the world that we really believe in that for which we have proclaimed to the world, we are at war.

"It is urgently necessary that we should thus prove our loyalty to democracy. For there are forces abroad in the land which are committing a black treason, a moral treason, against our republic. They are loudly proclaiming that while democracy is admirable as a theory to be forced upon other peoples, it is absurd, impracticable, and visionary as a course to be followed for ourselves. Our meeting here has been opposed, and we for insisting upon it have been denounced, on the ground that this democracy for which we fight is intended for export only, and is not for home consumption.

Should Set Example.

"Surely it is evident to any honest man that if we are to persuade the German people to accept our democratic ideals, we must make it plain that he will leave the Socialist party because of its war stand.

"I deeply regret that less than one-third of the membership of the Socialist Party has committed the party (so far as words that are not followed by deeds can commit the party) to a declaration that might easily be construed as an endorsement of draft-riots. Such use of language seems to me to be indefensible. Two of the best known members of the committee that formulated the report have privately assured me that they consider the language unfortunate; that in pledging support to "all mass movements against conscription" they did not mean to pledge support to draft-riots, and I have not the slightest belief that in the event of draft-riots that the party would support them.

"I opposed to the last American participation in the war, as I also opposed the enactment of a conscription law, but I contend that there are orderly ways in which the people may cause their government to do their bidding with regard to these matters as well as with regard to all others, and if the people do not see fit to use lawful methods, I will never approve unlawful ones, nor do I believe any political party should even seem to do so.

"Nevertheless, I shall remain a member of the Socialist Party. Never was my belief in the fundamental principles of Socialism greater than it is now. The Russian Socialists, by taking the lead in Socialism throughout the world, have given Socialism a prestige that it never had before. With the war unmistakably drawing to a close there will be much work for Socialists to do in America, and whatever I can do I shall do."

In recognition of faithful and comradely services we will send to every comrade who sends in twenty-five subscriptions, THE AMERICAN LABOR YEAR BOOK, priceless encyclopaedia of facts and figures on Labor — FREE. Ask for it when you send them in. THE AMERICAN SOCIALIST, 803 W. MADISON ST., CHICAGO, ILL.

Free Speech As A Virtue

One of our "patriotic" papers has an editorial entitled, "Shut up or be locked up." The same paper pays a glowing tribute to the "fearless man of Germany" Harden, who, as the paper says, "was loudly proclaiming bitter truths to the German people."

But, of course, Harden was right, while those who say unpleasant things are wrong.

The duty of the patriotic, apparently, is to denounce the enemy and follow his example.

—The People's Press, Cincinnati.

Benson Denies He Will Desert Party

The following statement has been issued by Allan L. Benson, last year's candidate for President on the Socialist ticket, in denial of the reports that he will leave the Socialist party because of its war stand.

"I deeply regret that less than one-third of the membership of the Socialist Party has committed the party (so far as words that are not followed by deeds can commit the party) to a declaration that might easily be construed as an endorsement of draft-riots. Such use of language seems to me to be indefensible. Two of the best known members of the committee that formulated the report have privately assured me that they consider the language unfortunate; that in pledging support to "all mass movements against conscription" they did not mean to pledge support to draft-riots, and I have not the slightest belief that in the event of draft-riots that the party would support them.

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"With the war unmistakably drawing to a close there will be much work for Socialists to do in America, and whatever I can do I shall do."

ALLAN L. BENSON.

The phrase in the St. Louis program which he says "might easily be construed as an endorsement of draft-riots", meant nothing of the kind. The words "We pledge our support to all mass movements" are about that those who cry about the Hohenzollern idea is right; that America much abandon her democracy in order to wage war; that the people are incapable of discussing the issues of life and death, of war and peace, are guilty of the blackest moral treason to the very life of the Republic, and of all republic. For what greater aid and comfort to the enemy could be given than to assert that every attempt at democracy during the war is pro-German?

"Senator Sherman of Illinois in presenting to the Senate the resolutions adopted at our mass meeting here, of May 27th, said that he believed the terms of peace should be arranged entirely by Secretary Lansing and Woodrow Wilson, and that neither Congress nor the people should ask or be given a voice in the matter.

It Is Un-American.

"That is precisely what the Kaiser told the Reichstag. Nobody would object to the Kaiser's concluding peace all by himself, if the Kaiser did all the fighting by himself. What we dissent from is the proposition that the people who are doing the fighting, the killing, the dying, the mourning and the paying should be told that they have nothing to say about what it is all for, or how long it shall be kept up. This proposition is purely Prussianistic, Kaiseristic, militaristic and un-American.

"Prussianism is a state of mind not geographically confined, it appears, to the Kingdom of Prussia. And those who cry that the people must be content to be pawns in this vast game of death, without murmur, without question, without discussion, for instance—autocracy. For the will of an individual to prevail is democracy.

Already the Tribune has gone on record as asserting that any congressman who heeds the voice of his constituents in preference to the editorials of the Tribune is a "traitor to democracy."

This gives a pretty clear idea of the brand of "democracy" this particularly vicious newspaper thinks we are fighting for. It is a democracy in which the will of an individual is supreme over the will of the great majority—always providing that the said individual is the principal owner of the Chicago Tribune.

Thanks for the definition, brother.

KENTUCKY SOCIALISTS ALIVE.

Report from Kentucky State Secretary Stark states that the garment workers are on strike and have been given free use of Karl Marx Hall as strike headquarters. Mass meetings of the strikers and the new Union of Garment Workers of the Amalgamated Garment Workers are held daily and over 250 members have joined the Union with 2500 members to be enrolled. That 18 members of the Garment Workers Union joined the Socialist local in a body including their President. That a monster Labor Day picnic will be held jointly between the Union and the Socialist Party campaign committee. The State Executive Committee of Kentucky has adopted a plan to put every new member taken in on The American Socialist sub list.

It was to thwart this desire that Disraeli sent the mobilized British fleet thru the Straits of the Dardanelles to stop the victorious Russian armies at the very gates of Stambul.

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"Ye Shall Know The Truth And The Truth Shall Make You Free"

Washington Like An Imperial Capital, Say Wilson's Supporters

American Republic Is Now Under Absolute One-Man Government, Is Asserted By New Republic And The Chicago Tribune.

"We have no war council. The President is our war council," said Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane in a recent public address. The phrase seems to sum up fairly well both the strength and the weakness of the Wilson administration in the present great national emergency!

With these words Henry M. Hyde, special writer for the Chicago Tribune, begins a survey of the situation at the capital.

President Wilson does not evade responsibility. He seems to invite it. His intellectual confidence is so great, his critics say, that he declines to make the necessary delegations and divisions of authority. Many of the large number of boards and commissions—a recent estimate was fifty-five—which have been created to handle great and vital problems are responsible only to him. They report to no other authority. His own official subordinates are said to bring to him for final decision nearly every problem of more than minor importance.

Even congress—the individual statesmen have a careful eye on their political future—has taken advantage of the readiness with which the president bows his shoulders to take on additional burden. To any historical student it is unnecessary to point out that this is the way autocracies begin.

Mr. Hyde continues: "It may be magnificent, but it is not war. The result is inevitable delay, much confusion, and occasional conflict of authority among administration officials.

It's one of the defects of President Wilson's great quality of self-confidence that he has few wise and disinterested advisers.

Like In Imperial Capitals.

Any man who occupies a position of vast power will find plenty of men who tell him only what they think he will like to hear. And the courtiers of Washington are not behind those of imperial capitals. When the ruler is a man of great intellectual self-confidence it takes a brave as well as a wise man to tell him what are recognized as unpleasant truths.

It is for attempting to lay before the American people the unquestioned and undisputed facts regarding this condition at Washington that The American Socialist is threatened with suppression.

The mantle of infallibility covers even the cabinet officials who are confessedly weak and incompetent with its imperial shade. Mr. Hyde continues:

Critics of the administration further say that the president's self-confidence prevents him from paying due attention to the weakness and the mistakes of some among his cabinet officers. They were chosen, indeed, with considerable attention to political and geographical considerations. Not many of them would have been chosen perhaps, to help direct the prosecution of the greatest war in history, to help guide the nation thru the greatest crisis since it was created. But the president selected them.

Sure To Act With Firmness.

His confidence in his own judgment, based, indeed, on some years of intimate contact with most of them, and his deep feeling of loyalty will lead him to support each of them until they have to his satisfaction demonstrated their incapacity.

And there is no way for Congress or the people to get back at them.

When a question regarding Bethmann-Hollweg's fitness for his position as chancellor of the empire was first raised, the Kaiser said:

"To doubt the fitness of my choice is equivalent to questioning my imperial judgment."

And the New Republic of New York adds, in an article written by William Hard, a publicist of the highest quality:

"This is concentration in government unknown at Berlin. The Kaiser would not tolerate it for one imperial instant. That is why he is alive."

"Politically and administratively Mr. Wilson needs decentralization. He cannot give us political unity or administrative unity any longer in his own one person. To-day, for the first time since Mr. Wilson formed his administration, it is being forced, slowly but manifestly, toward mere defensive. And the stake is the freedom and safety of the world."

This autocratic administration is necessary, says the administration's defenders, in order to cope with the industrial autocracy which is cheating and robbing the people under cover of the war.

This proves what we have maintained right along; that political autocracy is the necessary cover and shield of industrial autocracy—namely, Capitalism.

There is no way of preventing or defeating Political Autocracy except thru Industrial Democracy—namely, Socialism.

Socialism, and Socialism only, has the cure for the situation; it is, to nationalize immediately all the natural resources of coal, minerals, oil, railroads, and all other publicly necessary means of production, transportation and communication. Then to make the administration of these industries democratic.

This is the only cure; and Socialism is the only physician which can administer the medicine successfully.

Blank Columns Will Not Be Lost

Congressman B. C. Hilliard, of the First District of Colorado, writes:

"The American Socialist, Chicago.

"Full, free and frank expression, in press and speech, make for enlightenment and toleration. In an imperfect world, as man has made this, nothing can justify one man in an attempted suppression of the views of another man. The exclusion of your publication from the mails is wrong and must fail of its purpose. The blank columns will not be lost upon the people, never so thoughtful as now."

Caring For The Sick

In the Indiana state prison at Michigan City, there are about 3,500 inmates. Of these 8 per cent are insane. About 23 per cent have the intelligence of children of 10 years and under. About 38 per cent are epileptics.

These statistics are offered by Dr. Paul Bower of the Indiana state prison.

According to Dr. Bower a vast number of so-called "criminals" are not criminals at all, but merely sick men—sick in the head.

"If the jurors and judges took these things under consideration the unfortunate would be sent where they belong—not to prisons, but to asylums," said Dr. Bower.

Society today instead of being a friend of its "sick men" persists in being an enemy. Society will develop intelligence, however, with the coming of Socialism and then for the first time will the problem of our criminals receive serious consideration. Thus Socialism again will be the benefit both the strength and the weakness of the Wilson administration in the present great national emergency!

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J. L. ENGDAHL.....Editor

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SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1917.

The World Is In Disintegration; Cabinets Shake And Thrones Totter

As we go to press the world seems in process of disintegration. Alexander Kerensky has become premier of Russia and dominates that Republic as Napoleon dominated France. Great Britain's cabinet is shaking and references to the fear of revolution among English workingmen, only prevented by the bayonets of the 2,000,000 soldiers England is holding at home, become increasingly frequent in the utterances of the ministers. In France the People's Council movement is gaining strength.

Germany's bloodless revolt has subsided for a while, Michaelis is still being tried out. The Kaiser has held long conferences with the parliamentary leaders, apparently for discussing the introduction of a parliamentary system into the Reichstag.

German guns are trained on the city of Constantinople, with the threat that the Turkish capital will be bombarded if any further disorder develops. This seems to mean that the city of the Sultans is in revolt against German domination.

In the Hungarian Parliament Count Michael Karolyi arises and proclaims;

"Every one in Germany wants peace, but it is not enough to desire it, the nation must negotiate for it. Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian premier, has openly declared that we are ready for peace without annexations. One of the prerequisites of peace is the democratization of every country."

These indications show that everywhere in the Teutonic Federation there is grave unrest. Perhaps even Turkey will proclaim a Republic.

There is even hope that our own capitalist republic will become a Socialist republic. The rule of money will be abolished. Already the President has seen the coming of the new day, and in a terrific arraignment of the greed and cunning of the moneylords has prophesied the day when there shall be no "profit"—for Patriotism and Profit do not agree.

Government Rebukes Uniformed Men Who Broke Up Boston Parade

Replying to the official protest of the National Executive committee of the Socialist Party against the breakup of the Boston Peace parade by soldiers and sailors, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker has sent the following communication to the National Executive Secretary:

War Department, Washington.

July 9, 1917.

Dear Mr. Germer:—Thank you for sending me the copy of the letter to the President, signed by you and Messrs. Work, Hillquit, Berger, and Miss Maley.

I have been informed of incidents of the kind to which you refer, and have brought them promptly to the attention of the Adjutant General, and in the case of National Guard Officers to the attention of the Chief of the Militia Bureau, and as a result very definite instructions have been issued to the officers in command of troops as to the unlawful nature of such activities. If at any time you can inform me of specific instances of disorder on the part of men in uniform, I shall be very glad to see that prompt and vigorous action is taken.

Cordially yours,

(Signed) NEWTON D. BAKER.

Secretary of War.

In pursuance of the above request, we beg to call the attention of Secretary Baker to the conduct of Capt. E. O. Powell, commanding H Company, Sixth Ohio infantry, who on July 7 precipitated a small riot by violently breaking up a Socialist meeting at Broadway and Fifth streets, Lorain, Ohio. Five members of the Socialist speaking party, including Joseph Hazzard, ex-councilman; Fred W. Goll, secretary of the Lorain local branch of the Socialist party; H. M. Waite, and Samuel and Solomon Slutzer, were severely beaten.

The Socialists were speaking from an automobile, and began to discuss the origin of the war. Capt. Powell ordered them to avoid war issues. Waite, who was speaking, announced that he would stand on his constitutional rights. A squad of soldiers immediately attacked the speakers and beat them severely.

If the Secretary's letter means business—as we believe it does—we are confident that prosecution will at once begin against this captain who assaults American citizens for claiming the protection of the American Constitution.

We call attention also to the assault upon Chief of Police Edward Hyland, officer Thomas Larkin and three citizens of Martin's Ferry, Ohio, by three national guardsmen on March 2. These men are yet unpunished, altho prompt report was made to Governor Cox of Ohio.

Herbert S. Bigelow Wants To Know

Herbert Bigelow, a prominent radical minister and reformer of Cincinnati, O., issues the following in his paper, The People's Press:

A-SOCIALIST CHALLENGE.

A statement of mine to the effect that the Socialist Party is a close communion affair, has been challenged by a correspondent who intimates that it is easy to get into the Socialist Party and wants to know if I have ever tried.

If the Socialists will let me make my own private interpretation of the creed, as one may do in some churches, no doubt I could join their church and take the communion.

A man cannot change his mind to join a party.

He must be a free lance if he cannot find a party with which he is in fundamental agreement and which will be tolerant of his idiosyncrasies.

I am a Socialist if my definition of Socialism is allowed.

I believe in the collective ownership and operation of all those instruments of production and distribution which, when left in private hands, become the instruments of exploitation and oppression.

I do not believe it is now possible to make a complete and final list of such instruments, much less to take them all over at one fell swoop.

I am convinced that all transportation facilities should be taken over at once.

I am convinced that the business of mining coal should be immediately undertaken by the nation or by the State, if the nation does not act.

I am convinced that every other business which has become monopolized, such as the Standard Oil business, should be socialized.

I am opposed to the policy of the Republican and Democratic parties of seeking to thwart by prosecution, and to break up, the so-called Trusts.

I would let nature take her course with these trusts, and whenever I found a ripe trust on the tree of Capitalism, I would pick it and put it in the Socialist bag.

I agree that to the producer should go the full product of his toil. It is easier to say that than to measure exactly each producer's share. But we might make a beginning at least. For instance, we can identify some incomes as unquestionably unearned. The general increase in the value of land is unearned by the owners of land. Here alone is an income of \$5,000,000,000 a year in America, which is taken away from the producers. This should be given back. It might be collected in the form of ground rent and paid out in annual dividends to all the people. The child in the slums would get the same share of it as scion of the Astors. That would be just. But equally just and more expedient is the suggestion that out of this five billion of ground rent all taxes should be paid. With the balance, health insurance and old age pensions should be liberally provided, and educational facilities, such as we have never dared to hope for.

I believe that the right of inheritance should be curtailed. A man should be permitted to leave bequests sufficient to protect his widow or educate his children. But leaving money to support people in idleness is immoral. The great bulk of inherited fortunes should be taken. From funds so secured the people, thru their government, might loan money on easy terms at merely nominal interest to give the disinherited a start in life. The right of each person to a little patrimony is more sacred than the right of any man to a large one.

But I cannot undertake to tell all that I believe should be done.

As a boy on the farm I learned the difference between working in a potato patch of my own and hoeing the patch of another.

I am convinced that the present form of industry is deadly. It gives the factory operative no joy in his work, no interest, no dignity, no self-respect. Industry must be democratized. The men must somehow own the tools with which they work. They must be enfr